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ABSTRACT

The job title, "Home and School Visitor/School Social Worker" (HSV/SSW), suggests an ambiguous and unclear job role requiring a diversity of skills and a wide variety of educational credentials. HSV/SSW personnel (N=271) were surveyed to develop an accurate picture of the HSV/SSW as he/she exists in Pennsylvania today. Survey results presented a profile of the average HSV/SSW, including: (1) age and sex (51 to 55 year old female); (2) employer (employed by a public school district); (3) educational background (master's in education or social work); (4) professional status (certified by the Department of Education); (5) experience (9-15 years on the job); and (6) salary ($1200-1700 per month). The findings suggest the usefulness of a needs assessment to determine the effectiveness of and gaps in HSV/SSW services in Pennsylvania school districts; the adoption of definitive and clear standards for certification of HSV/SSW personnel; the need for improved preparation programs for HSV/SSW personnel; the adoption of continuing inservice training programs for practitioners and administrators; and the creation of additional training programs to prepare new HSV/SSW personnel as replacements for those nearing retirement. (PAS)

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# A DEMOGRAPHIC SURVEY OF HOME AND SCHOOL VISITOR/SCHOOL SOCIAL WORK PERSONNEL IN THE COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA

Sponsored by the Pennsylvania Association of
School Social Work Personnel and Endorsed by
the Pennsylvania Department of Education

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## Introduction

The title of this work "A Survey of Home and School Visitor/School Social Work Personnel in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania" implies a dual position title for this important personnel of the education system. It is this state of ambiguity in title, frequently unclear role, diversely perceived functions, and differential educational preparation requirements for professional certification that present the need for developing an accurate picture of the dimensions of home and school visitor/school social worker as it exists in Pennsylvania today.

The Pennsylvania Association of School Social Work Personnel Executive Committee volunteered to undertake this task, following the presentation of a questionnaire survey design by Dr. Mable T. Hawkins who had suggested the need for such a study. The value of conducting the survey was endorsed, also, by the Student Services Division of the Pennsylvania Department of Education. Thus, in May, 1981, questionnaires were mailed to 500 persons identified through the Pennsylvania Department of Education and the Pennsylvania Association of School Social Work Personnel as home and school visitors or school social work personnel.

Data received from the survey were compiled and analyzed by a task force at the University of Pittsburgh, School of Social Work. It is felt that this information will be of great assistance to the Pennsylvania Department of Education in its effort to provide essential services to our school systems.

Much indebtedness is due the task force members, Marie Cole Caldwell and Hide Yamatani, who gave considerable time to this task in the interest of promoting quality services to pupils, schools and communities.

Mable T. Hawkins, Ph.D., Chairperson
PASSWP Survey Task Force

January, 1982

## Survey Findings


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# A SURVEY OF HOME AND SCHOOL VISITOR/SCHOOL SOCIAL WORK PERSONNEL IN THE COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA

In May, 1981, the Pennsylvania Association of School Social Work Personnel undertook a survey of the Home School Visitor/School Social Work Personnel within the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. This project, which was endorsed and supported by the Pennsylvania Department of Education, was designed to provide a demographic picture of the types and levels of HSV/SSW services which are available to the Pennsylvania educational system.

## METHOD OF PROCEDURE

A questionnaire was mailed to 500 school personnel identified, through the Pennsylvania Department of Education and the Pennsylvania Association of School Social Work Personnel, as Home and School Visitors/School Social Workers. Raw data received from the questionnaires were tabulated and converted into percentages. In most instances, tables were constructed to provide a graphic picture of the survey. A simple analysis accompanies each table and a general summary statement is presented at the end of this report.

## Findings of Survey

## COUNTIES REPRESENTED

From 500 questionnaires there were 271 (54.2%) responses.

The respondents were from various parts of Pennsylvania, including 46 counties. The top five counties--more frequently represented by our sample group--were Allegheny, Philadelphia, Montgomery, Bucks and Delaware. These five counties represented a total of 140 (51.6%) of the entire number of respondents. The remaining 41 counties were represented by responses from one to eight respondents per county, or a total of 131 (48.3%) responses. (See Table A).

TABLE A - COUNTIES REPRESENTED BY NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS

| County | Frequency | Percentage of Respondents (N=271) |
|---|---|---|
| Allegheny | 60 | 22.1 |
| Philadelphia | 29 | 10.7 |
| Montgomery | 20 | 7.4 |
| Bucks | 16 | 5.9 |
| Delaware | 15 | 5.5 |
| Others (41 Counties) (With from 1-8 respondents per County) | 131 | 48.3 |

CERTIFICATED POSITION TITLES, EDUCATIONAL LEVELS, AND MAJOR EDUCATIONAL AREAS

Of the 271 respondents to our survey, 252 (93.7%) indicated certification by a state department of education. Two hundred forty-two (89.3%) of the 271 respondents reported certification as Home and School Visitors. One hundred thirteen (41.7%) of 271 respondents indicated certification as teachers; (17.7%) or 48 of 271 reported certification as counselors while 17 (6.3%) of 271 respondents indicated certification as nurses; 10 (3.7%) of 271 indicated certification as school social workers; and 3 (1.1%) of 271 reported certification as psychologists. (See Table B). There were 28 or (10.3%) respondents indicating certification under diverse titles, e.g., principal, supervisor, or administrator.

TABLE B - CERTIFICATION TITLES

| Certification Position Titles | Frequency | Percentage of Respondents (N=271)* |
|---|---|---|
| Home and School Visitor | 242 | 89.3 |
| Teacher | 113 | 41.7 |
| Counselor | 48 | 17.7 |
| Nurse | 17 | 6.3 |
| School Social Worker | 10 | 3.7 |
| Psychologist | 3 | 1.1 |
| Other | 28 | 10.3 |

*Total exceeds 100% since some respondents indicated more than one category.

Permanent certification was indicated by over 70% of respondents for each position title listed above in Table B.

The educational level of the sample ranged from Bachelor's to Doctoral level with the Master's degree being the most frequent and highest educational level completed. In this category, there were 186 individuals or 68.7% of our entire sample group. (See Table C).

TABLE C - EDUCATIONAL LEVELS

| Degree | Frequency | Percentage of Respondents (N=271) |
|---|---|---|
| Doctoral | 2 | 0.7 |
| Masters | 151 | 55.7 |
| Bachelors | 56 | 20.7 |
| Masters (Equivalency) | 11 | 4.1 |
| Masters Plus | 24 | 8.9 |
| Bachelors Plus | 25 | 9.2 |
| High School | 2 | 0.7 |

The major educational areas for which our samples acquired their degrees were education and social work. These two major educational areas totaled 194 individuals of 71.6% of the total respondents. (See Table D).

TABLE D - MAJOR EDUCATIONAL AREAS

| Educational Areas | Frequency | Percentage of Respondents (N=271) |
|---|---|---|
| Education | 104 | 38.4 |
| Social Work | 90 | 33.2 |
| Counseling | 31 | 11.4 |
| Psychology | 11 | 4.1 |
| Social Science | 8 | 3.0 |
| Physical Education | 6 | 2.2 |
| Humanities | 4 | 1.5 |
| Nursing | 3 | 1.1 |
| Other | 5 | 1.8 |
| Missing Data | 9 | 3.3 |

Cross tabulations were conducted for educational levels representing the highest frequencies, i.e., education, social work, counseling, psychology and social science referred to as "other". A cross tabulation of educational levels by major educational areas revealed that the respondents with masters level preparation were found most frequently in the following categories: Counseling -- of 31, 25 (80.6%) with masters; Social Work -- of 90, 59 (65.6%) with masters; and Education -- of 104, 61 (58.7%) with masters. (See Table E).

SEX AND AGE DISTRIBUTION

Of 271 respondents, 165 (60.9%) were females compared to 104 (38.4%) males. The remaining 2 (0.7%) individuals did not indicate their sex category. A cross tabulation of these totals with major educational areas (i.e., "social work", "education", "counseling", "psychology" and "other") revealed that within each educational area, with the exception of "education", females represent the dominant sex.

According to the age distribution of our sample, individuals between the ages of 31 to 55 years represented over 60% of the total respondents. (See Table F). The most frequent age category is 51 to 55 years old with 52 individuals or 19.2% of the total respondents indicating this middle age range, while a significant 38 (14.0%) of the respondents indicated an older age range of from 56 to 60 years, and almost an equal number 37 (13.7%) recorded a younger age range of from 31 to 35 years. (See Table F).

TABLE E - EDUCATIONAL LEVELS BY MAJOR EDUCATIONAL AREAS

| Educational Levels | Educational Areas | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Social Work | | Education | | Counseling | | Psychology | | Other | |
| | Frequency | Per. of Res.* (N=90) | Frequency | Per. of Res. (N=104) | Frequency | Per. of Res. (N=31) | Frequency | Per. of Res. (N=11) | Frequency | Per. of Res. (N=8) |
| Masters | 59 | 65.6 | 61 | 58.7 | 25 | 80.6 | 1 | 9.1 | 1 | 12.5 |
| Bachelors | 18 | 20.0 | 19 | 18.3 | -- | -- | 4 | 36.4 | 4 | 50.0 |
| Masters Equivalency | 2 | 2.2 | 4 | 3.8 | 1 | 3.2 | -- | -- | 1 | 12.5 |
| Masters Plus | 7 | 7.8 | 12 | 11.5 | 5 | 16.1 | -- | -- | 2 | 25.0 |
| Bachelors Plus | 4 | 4.4 | 8 | 7.7 | -- | -- | 6 | 54.5 | -- | -- |

*Percentage of Respondents

TABLE F - AGE DISTRIBUTION

| Age | Frequency | Percentage of Respondents (N=271) |
|---|---|---|
| 21 to 25 years | 3 | 1.1 |
| 26 to 30 years | 11 | 4.1 |
| 31 to 35 years | 37 | 13.7 |
| 36 to 40 years | 29 | 10.7 |
| 41 to 45 years | 27 | 10.0 |
| 46 to 50 years | 28 | 10.3 |
| 51 to 55 years | 52 | 19.2 |
| 56 to 60 years | 38 | 14.0 |
| 61 to 65 years | 16 | 5.9 |
| 65 plus | 5 | 1.8 |
| Missing Data | 25 | 9.2 |

EMPLOYMENT STATUS

Almost all of our respondents were employed except for three individuals who indicated that they were currently unemployed. Over 75.3% of the sampled individuals indicated that they were employed full-time while the remaining 24.7% of the individuals were employed part-time.

The place of employment was primarily with public schools as indicated by 229 respondents or 84.5% of the entire sample. Thirty-four (12.5%) individuals recorded that they were employed by the intermediate units and the remaining eight individuals indicated various other employment settings. (See Table G).

TABLE G - PLACE OF EMPLOYMENT

| Location | Absolute Frequency | Relative Frequency (N=271) |
|---|---|---|
| Public Schools | 229 | 84.5 |
| Intermediate Units | 34 | 12.5 |
| Other | 8 | 3.0 |

Respondents indicating major preparation in education and in social work, 98 (94.2%) of 104 and 66 (73.3%) of 90 respectively, represent the greatest frequency for employment in public schools. Major preparation in social work is primarily indicated by responses of 24 (26.7%) for social work and 2 (1.8%) for education in relation to employment in the intermediate units. (See Table H).

TABLE H - PLACE OF EMPLOYMENT ACCORDING TO RESPONDENTS' MAJOR EDUCATIONAL AREA

| | Major Educational Areas | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Social Work | | Education | | Counseling | | Psychology | | Other | |
| Employment | Frequency | Per. of Res.* (N=90) | Frequency | Per. of Res. (N=104) | Frequency | Per. of Res. (N=31) | Frequency | Per. of Res. (N=11) | Frequency | Per. of Res. (N=8) |
| Public School | 66 | 73.3 | 98 | 94.2 | 27 | 87.1 | 9 | 81.8 | 6 | 75.0 |
| Intermediate Unit | 24 | 26.7 | 2 | 1.8 | 3 | 9.7 | 2 | 18.2 | -- | -- |
| Other | -- | -- | 4 | 3.0 | 1 | 3.2 | -- | -- | 2 | 25.0 |

*Percentage of Respondents

The length of job experience as Home and School Visitor ranged from one year to over 20 years with the most typical job experience category being 9 to 15 years. (See Table I).

TABLE I - YEARS OF JOB EXPERIENCE AS HOME AND SCHOOL VISITOR

| Years | Frequency | Percentage of Respondents (N=271) |
|---|---|---|
| 1 to 3 years | 31 | 11.4 |
| 4 to 8 years | 49 | 18.1 |
| 9 to 15 years | 69 | 25.5 |
| 15 to 20 years | 33 | 12.2 |
| Over 20 years | 28 | 10.3 |
| Does not apply | 61 | 22.5 |

ADMINISTRATION, SUPERVISION AND FUNCTION

The Departments which administer the functions of home school visitor/school social workers are indicated as varying across the state of Pennsylvania. Of 271 respondents, 135 (49.8%) noted that their functions are administered or coordinated by Pupil Personnel Departments. The offices of Superintendents and Principals ranked second and third since these offices were noted by totals of 54 (19.9%) and 35 (12.9%) respondents respectively. (See Table J).

TABLE J - DEPARTMENTS WHICH COORDINATE OR ADMINISTER HOME AND SCHOOL VISITORS/SCHOOL SOCIAL WORKERS' FUNCTIONS

| Department or Office | Frequency | Percentage of Respondents (N=271)* |
|---|---|---|
| Pupil Personnel | 135 | 49.8 |
| Superintendent | 54 | 19.9 |
| Principal | 35 | 12.9 |
| Social Work | 15 | 5.5 |
| Special Education | 15 | 5.5 |
| Department of Pupil Service | 7 | 2.6 |
| Assistant Superintendent | 6 | 2.2 |
| Learning Adjustment Program | 5 | 1.8 |
| Psychology | 5 | 1.8 |
| Counselor | 4 | 1.5 |
| Diagnostic and Consultative Services | 3 | 1.1 |
| ESEA Title I Federal Coordinator | 3 | 1.1 |
| Other | 18 | 6.6 |

*Total exceeds 100%, since some respondents indicated more than one department and/or office.

There appeared to be some differences in the pattern of responses to the question regarding the immediate supervisor of home school visitors/ school social workers and the pattern of responses to the question regarding the office which administers or coordinates the respondents' functions. In response to this question, 90 (33.2%) of 271 respondents reported the Pupil Personnel Department as immediate supervisor; 48 (17.7%) of the respondents indicated immediate supervision from the Office of School Principals; while 46 (17%) were supervised by the Office of School Superintendents. (See Table K).

TABLE K - IMMEDIATE SUPERVISORS OF HOME SCHOOL VISITORS/SCHOOL SOCIAL WORKERS

| Responsible For Supervision | Frequency | Percentage of Respondents (N=271)* |
|---|---|---|
| Pupil Personnel | 90 | 33.2 |
| School Principal | 48 | 17.7 |
| School Superintendent | 46 | 17.0 |
| Supervisor of Special Education | 18 | 6.6 |
| Assistant Superintendent | 8 | 3.0 |
| Social Work | 8 | 3.0 |
| Director of Pupil Services | 7 | 2.6 |
| Psychology | 6 | 2.2 |
| Counselor | 5 | 1.8 |
| ESEA Title I Federal Coordinator | 5 | 1.8 |
| Supervisor of Learning Adjustment Program | 4 | 1.5 |
| None | 1 | 0.4 |
| Other | 22 | 8.1 |

*Total exceeds 100%, since some respondents indicated more than one category.

The employment functions of home school visitors/school social workers cover a broad range. At least eighteen different functions were given in response to the question raised in this area. The majority, 257 (99.8%), of 271 respondents in this study reported parent-child counseling as a primary function. Other employment functions which were indicated at high frequency levels include making referrals, handling attendance problems, group work, community work, work with special education, and work with adolescent parents of school age. (See Table L).

TABLE L - FUNCTIONS CONDUCTED IN CURRENT EMPLOYMENT BY HOME SCHOOL VISITORS/SCHOOL SOCIAL WORKERS

| Employment Functions | Frequency | Percentage of Respondents (N=271)* |
|---|---|---|
| Counseling (Child-Parent) | 257 | 94.8 |
| Referrals | 240 | 88.6 |
| Attendance Problems | 238 | 88.2 |
| Group Work (Pupils-Parents-School Personnel) | 195 | 72.0 |
| Community Work (Agencies-Citizen's Group) | 194 | 71.6 |
| Special Education | 153 | 56.5 |
| Adolescent Parents of School Age | 136 | 50.2 |
| In Service Training | 119 | 43.9 |
| Desegregation | 87 | 32.1 |
| Administration | 62 | 22.9 |
| Research | 56 | 20.7 |
| Special Programs | 30 | 11.1 |
| Consultation | 25 | 9.2 |
| Child Accounting | 23 | 8.0 |
| Court Appearances | 10 | 3.7 |
| Other Problem Areas Assigned | 3 | 1.1 |
| Field Instruction | 2 | .07 |
| Other | 25 | 8.0 |

*Total exceeds 100% due to responses to more than one category.

A further examination of functions indicated by respondents, according to major levels of preparation, revealed those home school visitors/school social workers with social work or education as major preparation levels, record the highest number of frequencies in all categories of functions. However, functions involving group work, special education, desegregation, in service training, referrals, and adolescent parents are recorded at a higher relative frequency by respondents indicating a major level of preparation in social work as compared to education. The most notable differences in functions are indicated by 67 (74.4%) of 90 respondents in the social work category reporting group work functions and 66 (73.3%) reporting special education functions in comparison to 31 (29.8%) of 104 respondents in the education category reporting group work and 50 (48.1%) of the 104 respondents reporting special education functions. (See Table M).

TABLE M - FUNCTIONS MOST FREQUENTLY NOTED BY MAJOR EDUCATIONAL AREAS OF SOCIAL WORK AND EDUCATION

| | Major Educational Areas | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Social Work | | Education | |
| Functions | Frequency | Percentage of Respondents (N=90) | Frequency | Percentage of Respondents (N=104) |
| Counseling | 89 | 98.9 | 94 | 90.4 |
| Referrals | 82 | 91.1 | 90 | 86.5 |
| Attendance Problems | 74 | 82.2 | 95 | 91.3 |
| Group Work | 67 | 74.4 | 31 | 29.8 |
| Community Work | 66 | 73.3 | 78 | 75.0 |
| Special Education | 66 | 73.3 | 50 | 48.1 |
| Adolescent Parents of School Age | 46 | 51.1 | 51 | 49.0 |
| In Service Training | 50 | 55.6 | 38 | 36.5 |

TIME SPENT IN PERFORMANCE OF FUNCTIONS

The dispersion of time used in employment functions each week, as indicated by home school visitors/school social workers, is a significant aspect of this study. The respondents were asked to estimate time spent in each function by using a scale of from 1% to 100%. the time frequencies indicated for each function ranged from 1% to 95%, but varied generally within a range of 5% and 25%. The following three functions were most frequently indicated in relation to time spent: (1) "Counseling" (child-parent); (2) "Referrals"; and (3) "Attendance Problems".

In response to this question, "counseling" (child-parent) was indicated by 221 (81%) of 271 respondents. Of these 221 respondents, 50 (22.6%) reported spending 10% of their time in "counseling" while an additional 45 (20.3%) of the 221 recorded spending 20% of their weekly time in the "counseling" activity.

"Attendance problems" was another activity indicated by 221 (81%) of 271 respondents. Although the range of time spent in the "attendance" activity varied from 5% to 95% weekly, the most frequent number of responses 28 (12.5%), of 221 respondents, recorded spending 50% of their time in the "attendance" activity and 19 (.09%) of 221 respondents indicated spending only 5% of their time in "attendance" functions.

The third job function receiving a high number of responses was that of "referrals" noted by 215 respondents. The greatest proportion 70 (32.5%) of these 215 respondents indicated spending 10% of their weekly time making referrals to other sources, while 50 (23.2%) of 215 respondents spend 5% of their weekly time in this function.

MEMBERSHIP IN PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

Home school visitors/school social workers hold memberships in a variety of professional and work related associations. While some maintain memberships in more than one association, less than 50% of the respondents belong to any one organization. Two state organizations claim the greatest number of respondents, the Pennsylvania State Education Association with 123 (45.4%) of 271 respondents and the Pennsylvania Association of School Social Work Personnel with 106 (39.1%) of 271 respondents. Membership in the national professional social work organization, the National Association of Social Workers, was indicated by only 35 (12.9%) of the 271 respondents. Table N reveals the distribution of memberships and the various organizations.

TABLE N

| Professional Organizations | Frequency | Percentage of Respondents (N=271)* |
|---|---|---|
| PSEA | 123 | 45.4 |
| PASSWP | 106 | 39.1 |
| NEA | 103 | 38.0 |
| NASW | 35 | 12.9 |
| AFT - Local | 20 | 7.4 |
| Attendance Child Accounting Professional Association | 5 | 1.8 |
| Allegheny County Counselors Association | 4 | 1.5 |
| IAPPW | 3 | 1.1 |
| Council of Exceptional Children | 3 | 1.1 |
| Other | 33 | 12.2 |

*Total exceeds 100% due to responses to more than one category.

Cross tabulations of data compiled on memberships in professional organizations reveal that respondents representing social work, education, counseling, psychology, and social science (other) in our sample tend to have membership primarily in professional associations which correlate with their major area of academic preparation. The highest number of respondents with major preparation in social work 47 (52.2%) of 90 indicated membership in PASSWP, and 29 (32.2%) reported membership in NASW, while a considerably lower number, 22 (24.2%) of 90 respondents in the social work category indicated membership in NEA (National Education Association). Respondents with major preparation in education recorded the highest number 52 (50%) of 104 responses indicating membership in PSEA (Pennsylvania State Education Association), and 49 (47.1%) reporting membership in NEA, while the lower frequencies, 35 (33.7%) reported PASSWP membership and 5 (4.8%) of 104 recorded membership in NASW (National Association of Social Workers). Respondents with major preparation in either Counseling or Psychology indicated primary memberships in PSEA and NEA organizations. (See Table O - page 15).

MONTHLY SALARY SCHEDULE

The monthly salary range indicated by the highest number of responses to our survey is $2100 and up, recorded by 61 (22.5%) of a total of 271 respondents. The average monthly salary range, however, tends to fall between $1200 to $1400 and $1500 to $1700 as indicated by 48 (17.7%) and 47 (17.3%) respectively of the 271 respondents. (See Table P).

TABLE P - MONTHLY SALARY

| Monthly Salary | Frequency | Percentage of Respondents (N=271) |
|---|---|---|
| Under $600 | 2 | 0.7 |
| $600 - $ 800 | 11 | 4.1 |
| $900 - $1100 | 31 | 11.4 |
| $1200 - $1400 | 48 | 17.7 |
| $1500 - $1700 | 47 | 17.3 |
| $1800 - $2000 | 40 | 14.8 |
| $2100 and over | 61 | 22.5 |
| No Response | 31 | 11.4 |

Cross tabulation of responses from our sample group representing major educational preparation in social work, education, counseling, psychology, and social science (other) indicate that $2100 and up is the salary range with the highest frequency for all respondents except those in the counseling, psychology and social science (other) categories. The highest salary range frequency noted by respondents with major preparation in psychology is $1500 to $1700 and $900 to $1100 for social science (other). It should be noted, however, that a significant 8 (25.8%) of 31 counseling respondents reported a salary range of $2100 and up. (See Table Q - page 16).

TABLE O - PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP BY MAJOR EDUCATIONAL AREA

| Professional Associations | Major Educational Area** | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Social Work | | Education | | Counseling | | Psychology | | Other | |
| | Frequency | Per. of Res.* (N=90) | Frequency | Per. of Res. (N=104) | Frequency | Per. of Res. (N=31) | Frequency | Per. of Res. (N=11) | Frequency | Per. of Res. (N=8) |
| PASSWP | 47 | 52.2 | 35 | 33.7 | 11 | 35.5 | 2 | 18.2 | 5 | 62.5 |
| PSEA | 31 | 34.4 | 52 | 50.0 | 24 | 77.4 | 3 | 27.3 | 4 | 50.0 |
| NEA | 22 | 24.2 | 49 | 47.1 | 19 | 61.3 | 3 | 27.3 | 2 | 25.0 |
| NASW | 29 | 32.2 | 5 | 4.8 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 9.1 | 0 | 0 |
| Other | 19 | 21.1 | 28 | 26.9 | 12 | 38.7 | 2 | 18.2 | 1 | 12.5 |

*Percentage of Respondents

**Totals for all major educational areas (excluding psychology) exceed 100% since some respondents indicated more than one category.

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TABLE Q - MONTHLY SALARY SCHEDULE BY MAJOR EDUCATIONAL AREA**

| | Major Educational Area | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Social Work | | Education | | Counseling | | Psychology | | Other | |
| Monthly Salary | Frequency | Per. of Res.* (N=90) | Frequency | Per. of Res. (N=104) | Frequency | Per. of Res. (N=31) | Frequency | Per. of Res. (N=11) | Frequency | Per. of Res. (N=8) |
| Under $600 | 0 | 0 | 1 | .01 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| $ 600 - $ 800 | 10 | 11.1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| $ 900 - $1100 | 9 | 10.0 | 11 | 10.6 | 1 | 3.2 | 1 | 9.1 | 4 | 50.0 |
| $1200 - $1400 | 17 | 18.9 | 19 | 18.3 | 4 | 12.9 | 2 | 18.2 | 1 | 12.5 |
| $1500 - $1700 | 9 | 10.0 | 20 | 19.2 | 11 | 35.5 | 4 | 36.4 | 1 | 12.5 |
| $1800 - $2000 | 14 | 15.0 | 18 | 17.3 | 4 | 12.9 | 1 | 9.1 | 0 | 0 |
| $2100 - Up | 22 | 24.4 | 23 | 22.1 | 8 | 25.8 | 2 | 18.2 | 0 | 0 |
| No Response | 9 | 10.0 | 12 | 11.5 | 3 | 9.6 | 1 | .09 | 2 | 25.0 |

*Percentage of Respondents
**Includes only the educational areas which received the highest number of responses

SUMMARY STATEMENT

The following description represents a profile of the average home and school visitor/school social worker in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania as reflected in our survey sample. This average home and school visitor/school social worker is a 51 to 55 year old female, employed by a public school district in either Allegheny, Philadelphia or Montgomery counties. She has earned a masters degree in either education or social work, and she is certified by the Pennsylvania Department of Education as a home and school visitor.

Her length of experience in the home and school visitor position averages between 9 and 15 years. Although her job functions usually are coordinated and administered under the Pupil Personnel office of the school district in which she is employed, her immediate supervisor is as likely to be the school principal, or school superintendent as to be the pupil personnel director. In her provision of services to schools, she most frequently conducts the following three functions: (1) counseling (child-parent); (2) making referrals to other agency resources; and (3) handling attendance problems. She reports that her most frequent activity is counseling, but she indicates spending only 10% to 20% (4 to 8 hours) of her weekly time in this activity, while 50% (20 hours) of her weekly time is generally consumed in attendance activities. She tends to spend only 5% (2 hours) of her weekly time on interventive activities, including specialized services such as group work, community work, special education, work with adolescent parents of school age, and inservice training. If her major educational area is in social work, she may engage in the specialized services listed above more frequently than in other activities, thus, she may spend more time in these diverse activities; and she is also most likely to be identified for employment in an intermediate unit.

Finally, our profile of the average home and school visitor/school social worker indicates that she earns a monthly salary of between $1200 and $1700, and she is a member of two professional associations. If her major educational area is education, she is generally a member of PSEA and NEA. If her major educational area is social work, she generally has membership in the PASSWP and PSEA or possibly NASW.

Implications

There are broad implications reflected by this survey on HSV/SSW services in Pennsylvania. Since the greatest percentage (51.6%) of the total of 271 HSV/SSW respondents indicate employment in five Pennsylvania counties and the remaining percentage (48.3%) of 271 respondents are employed throughout the other forty-one counties, a needs assessment might be considered for determination of the effectiveness and/or gaps in HSV/SSW services in school districts across the state.

The obvious blurring of certification requirements for the HSV/SSW personnel, whose major educational background may be in diverse areas of study, seems to indicate a need for the Pennsylvania Department of Education to adopt definitive and clear standards for certification and administration of the services of home and school visitors/school social work personnel. This need has been supported in several national studies.[1] There is, reflected in the survey, a distinct difference in the types of services that each is prepared to provide. Thus, inclusion in the Pennsylvania School Code of the position title "school social worker" would be an important consideration, and the benefit to school districts in being able to distinguish between and select particular services needed for particular schools would be promoted.

One of the key concerns facing schools today is the age old problem of absenteeism. Since absenteeism is primarily a symptom of other underlying problems, there is a need for more effective intervention than simply the age old process of law enforcement. Effective intervention requires skills for working with family, school, and community systems.[2] Without these special skills to meet the changing individual pupil, family, community and school needs, the home and school visitor/school social worker will continue to be limited to the provision of services for mere pupil accounting. More effective intervention assumes, of course, that the HSV/SSW services are coordinated, administered, and supervised by persons knowledgeable and skilled in the HSV/SSW area of service.[3]

The survey findings indicate that 50% of the home and school visitor's weekly time is used in the attendance activity (which may involve home visits, court procedures and paper work), yet, a minimal amount of the worker's weekly time (10% to 20%) was reported to be used in counseling and even less time (5% weekly) was reportedly spent in specialized intervention with underlying contributors to absenteeism; i.e., dysfunctional families; disruptive school groups; concerned, despairing school personnel; adolescent school age pregnant girls; isolation felt by children involved in desegregation programs; unmet special education needs of pupils and their parents; etc. Notwithstanding the possible limitations of our findings, based upon respondents' differential understanding and interpretation of some questions, the survey questionnaire is generally clear and valid. It is blatantly clear in the survey findings that there is need for enhanced competency practice levels of HSV/SSW school personnel and there is need for improved administration of this service. Thus, consideration should be given to develop increased, quality level preparation programs for certification of HSV/SSW personnel.

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[1]Mable T. Emanuel Hawkins, "State Standards for Certificated School Social Workers, Visiting Teachers, Attendance Workers, and Home School Visitors" (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Pittsburgh, 1979), p. 35.

[2]Norma Radin, "A Personal Perspective on School Social Work," Social Casework, December, 1975, p. 612.

[3]Paula Allen Meares, "Analysis of Tasks in School Social Work," Journal of the National Association of Social Workers, Social Work, Vol. 22, No. 3, May, 1977, p. 200.

There is indicated a need for regular, continuing in-service training programs, for both practitioners and their administrators, to provide not only remedial services, but also preventive services. Further, the survey reflection of the average home and school visitor/school social worker as being in the middle age (51 years to 55 years) or older group, has important implications for providing additional training programs to prepare for replacement of those home and school visitors/school social workers who are nearing retirement.

It is suggested that other studies might be undertaken to focus upon more definitive aspects of this survey. Such studies should afford further insight to the Pennsylvania Department of Education for the provision of quality services to schools.

These are critical times during which the social, economic and educational needs of children and families are increasing daily. It is hoped that the findings of this survey will be utilized by the Pennsylvania Department of Education and PASSWP to develop constructive, effective school social service programs.

Mable T. Hawkins, Ph.D.
Chairperson, PASSWP Survey of
HSV/SSW Personnel in Pennsylvania

APPENDIX

PENNSYLVANIA ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL SOCIAL WORK PERSONNEL

SURVEY OF HOME AND SCHOOL VISITOR/SCHOOL SOCIAL WORK SERVICE PERSONNEL IN THE STATE OF PENNSYLVANIA

Sex: Male _____ Female _____

Address: Name the County in which you are employed _____

I. Certified for employment by a State Department of Education
   A. Yes _____
   B. No _____
   If "A" is checked, please identify the state from which certification was obtained: _____

II. Certificated Position Titles (check all applicable)

| | | By what State: |
|---|---|---|
| A. Home and School Visitor | ___ | _____ |
| B. School Social Worker* | ___ | _____ |
| C. Teacher | ___ | _____ |
| D. Nurse | ___ | _____ |
| E. Counselor | ___ | _____ |
| F. Psychologist | ___ | _____ |
| G. Other Title: _____ | ___ | _____ |

*Pennsylvania does not certificate a position title of "School Social Worker."

III. Level of Certification (Circle appropriate letter(s) corresponding with titles listed in Question No. II.)

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Provisional | A | B | C | D | E | F | G |
| Permanent | A | B | C | D | E | F | G |

IV. Highest Educational Level Completed (check one)

   A. Doctorate ___
   B. Master's Degree ___
   C. Bachelor's Degree ___
   D. Associate Degree ___
   E. Other ___ Please identify: _____

   If either "B" (Master's Degree) or "C" (Bachelor's Degree) is checked, please indicate the major area for which the degree was granted by checking one of the following:

   1. Social Work ___
   2. Education ___
   3. Counseling ___
   4. Psychology ___
   5. Other ___

   If "Other" is checked, please identify in this space:

   _____

V. Years of experience in schools as a Home School Visitor and/or School Social Worker:

| | Home and School Visitor | School Social Worker |
|---|---|---|
| A. 1 to 3 years | ____ | ____ |
| B. 4 to 8 years | ____ | ____ |
| C. 9 to 15 years | ____ | ____ |
| D. 15 to 20 years | ____ | ____ |
| E. Over 20 years | ____ | ____ |

VI. Employment Status

A. Employed ___
B. Unemployed ___

VII. Current Place of Employment

A. Public School ___
B. Intermediate Unit ___
C. Private School ___
D. State Department ___
E. Private Social Work Agency ___
F. Other ___

If "Other" is checked, please describe in this space:

_____

VIII. Type of Employment (check all applicable responses)

A. Full time ___
B. Part time ___
C. 12 months ___
D. 9 months ___
E. Other ___

If "Other" is checked, please describe in this space:

_____

IX. Which Department Coordinates or Administers Your Functions

A. School Superintendent ___
B. School Principal ___
C. Social Work ___
D. Pupil Personnel ___
E. Counseling ___
F. Psychology ___
G. Nursing ___
H. None ___
I. Other ___ Specify _____

X. Who is your immediate supervisor

A. School Superintendent ___
B. School Principal ___
C. Social Work ___
D. Pupil Personnel ___
E. Counseling ___
F. Psychology ___
G. Nursing ___
H. None ___
I. Other ___ Specify _____

XI. Employment Functions Conducted in Current Employment (check all applicable)

A. Counseling (Child-Parent) ___
B. Group Work (Pupils-Parents-School Personnel) ___
C. Community Work (Agencies-Citizens Group) ___
D. Special Education (Assist in implementation of PL 94-142 or other special educational programs) ___
E. Desegregation (Work to prevent and/or correct negative effects of minority isolation in school systems) ___
F. Attendance Problems ___
G. In-Service Training (Coordinate and conduct workshops) ___
H. Referrals (Make referrals to other helping sources) ___
I. Administration (Supervise, coordinate staff programs) ___
J. Research (Study and evaluate programs; proposal writing) ___
K. Adolescent Parents of School Age ___
L. Other ___

If "Other" is checked, please describe in this space:

_____

_____

_____

XII. Percent of Time Spent in Performance of Each Function

Please estimate the percentage of time you spend weekly in each job function using a scale from 1% to 100%. The amount of time should total 100%.

| Functions | Percent of Time Per Week |
|---|---|
| A. Counseling | ____ |
| B. Group Work | ____ |
| C. Community Work | ____ |
| D. Special Education | ____ |
| E. Desegregation | ____ |
| F. Attendance Problems | ____ |
| G. In-Service Training | ____ |
| H. Referrals | ____ |
| I. Administration | ____ |
| J. Research | ____ |
| K. Other | ____ |

XIII. Membership in Professional Associations (check all applicable)

A. PASSWP ___
B. PSEA ___
C. NEA ___
D. NASW ___
E. Other ___

If "Other is checked, please identify in this space:

_____

XIV. Age Category

A. 21 - 25 years ___
B. 26 - 30 years ___
C. 31 - 35 years ___
D. 36 - 40 years ___
E. 41 - 45 years ___
F. 46 - 50 years ___
G. 51 - 55 years ___
H. 56 - 60 years ___
I. 61 - 65 years ___
J. 65 and over ___

XV. Monthly Salary Schedule

A. Under $600 ___
B. $600 - $800 ___
C. $900 - $1100 ___
D. $1200 - $1400 ___
E. $1500 - $1700 ___
F. $1800 - $2000 ___
G. $2100 and over ___

THANK YOU